



KATHERINE SHIPMAN BATTE

HISTORY
OF
VALLEY CREEK
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

SELMA, ALABAMA.



BY
KATHERINE SHIPMAN BATTE.

Dedicated to my husband,
Rev. Junius M. Batte, pastor
of Valley Creek Church.

Katherine Shipman Batte.



REV. JUNIUS M. BATTE

VALLEY CREEK CHURCH.

When we say history what do we mean, some fanciful idea, some romantic affair, or some deed of heroism that might have occurred, had circumstances been favorable? No, when we record history we state something that really transpired in the routine of man's life. In writing this, I am endeavoring to relate facts. Much of the early history has been lost, some through fire, but more through the death of those soldiers of the cross, whose mouldering bones lie beneath the sod. Could we but again sit before the warm blaze of the crackling yule log as she blazes and sparkles, sending forth her warmth and brightness; there, listening to the daring deeds of our forefathers of centuries past. Hushed in death are those voices, now only the pages of history can relate those circumstances, which make up the life of a nation. In writing this little history; I do not wish simply to place before the minds of the people the rise or fall of so great an organization. But to show the coming generation what great things have been done; they seeing the, "foot prints on the sands of time," may push forward to build a tower of strength, a character which can not be erased. And say as those loved ones who have gone before:

"I love thy church, oh, God!

Her walls before thee stand,

Dear as the apple of thine eye,

Engraven on thy hand."

It is with much regret that an early history of the Old Valley Creek Church was not written. Is it not strange in a community, so long distinguished for her intellect, her patriotism, her morals and her religion that we must be compelled to "glean and gather," up from the debris of time the material to compile the history of our Valley Creek Church? The second oldest Presbyterian

church in the state of Alabama. Huntsville claims the ascendancy of a short time. Yet, we can not help feel that Valley Creek should have the honor. We count the existence of things from their birth not from the time they stand alone, or perhaps walk or brought into notice by some great deed. It would be almost unreasonable to believe that those christian people coming from the "Rocky River Church and other congregations of North Carolina landing in Dallas County about 1817 should have waited a year or more before assembling in some favorite place and there hold worship. We believe it was done, therefore we conceive of the idea that the church was established some time before it was asknnowledged by the Presbytery.

"From the end of the earth will I cry
 When my heart is over whelmed,
 Lead me to the rock that is higher than I"
 Their trust was only in the "Rock of Ages."

Yet, it was not for the lack of interest on the part of those, who first broke the soil around the sainted church doors that we have no history. They were a very busy people. doing what they thought most important first. Therefore, we must search through the debris of time or dig among the ashes of an expired generation to collect the early facts; much has passed beyond the recovery of man. I hope that all is not lost and yet, hope to bring to light hidden things and thus preserve the history of this church.

I shall be compelled to rob the grave stones of their inscriptions and gather from the feeble voice of tradition still audible and from such resources, as, are well, authenticated.

We must not judge the past by what we see, do not imagine, that, that massive brick structure has always held its proud head so high, and basked in the golden sun. Do not imagine that days of toil and nights of anxiety were not spent in getting such a house nor do not imagine that the organiza-

tion was there from creation, and the toiling missionaries did not come from afar and sow the seed, and patiently wait for the Lord to send the harvest.

For me thinks I can hear them as they plead.

"Do you know there's one who loves thee

Poor and loveless thou are
That the tender peerless Savior

Longs to fold thee, to his heart?"

Then, poor despairing, out cast one,

Oh, come while 'tis called, "To-day!"

Tomorrow ne'er may dawn for thee,

For the Christ is on his way."

"What the missionaries did was a work of faith and a labor of love."

"Sacred is the trust now committed to us." A sublime honor has fallen upon us. To care for the church and advance its work which was begun years ago."

Valley Creek Church.

Is located in Dallas County, Alabama, near the northern part of the county about five miles north-west of Selma on the hills between the Range Line and Summerfield roads, in Pleasant Valley, and about one-half mile from the creek; hence, the organization is known as "Valley Creek Church." The situation itself tells of God's love, there beneath the shadows of the oaks, she stands; the gentle zephyrs kiss the century worn cheek—and the birds make glad the hallowed, spot as they warble their merry songs, the creek with her gentle ripple lulls the night fall to sleep and laughs the morning sun to brightness and, "makes the meadow green and proud."

The Organization.

The date of the organization is uncertain, it is supposed by some to have been as early as 1817, others give the date



REPRESENTATION OF ORIGINAL VALLEY CREEK CHURCH

1818 and 1819. It is very evident there had been preaching occasionally in this neighborhood, as early as 1817 under the forest oaks. But the first sermon which can be reliably authenticated was under the spreading oak near where once stood the home of Mr. Robert Morrison in 1818. This Missionary was sent by the New York Presbytery. The second sermon was near the spot where the church now stands in front of Mr. David Russells home, but time, many years ago saw this home decay and there now only a few brick remain to mark the spot.

When this church was organized the Indians still roamed the forest, the state had just been admitted and Dallas County laid out. William Wyatte Bibb, was Governor; a Virginian by birth, a graduate of William and Mary College and a physician by practice.

In 1817 from Mecklenburg, N. C., eight Scotch-Irish families started on the long journey to Pleasant Valley, Alabama. Passing Fort Jackson, four families decided to remain over and make a crop of Indian corn before going further into the wilderness. Afterwards they floated down the Alabama river to Moores' Bluff, (now called Selma.) Wm. Morrison, the apostle of the valley, his brothers Robert, Carson and John, Christopher Osborne, Enoch Morgan and Major James Russell, (see Picketts history) and their families were the first pale faces who began the clearing of forests, building of roads and homes and tilling the soil in a new land where "Nature oftener took the Indian's part." Scarcely were the chimneys of their crude homes completed before a log church was erected near the site of the present structure. Here, each Sabbath morning these Scotch Presbyterians assembled and read from a book of sermons brought from their home far across the seas words of comfort and hope.

(Selma Journal, by Mrs. Ida M. Peacock.)

The states contributing mostly to swell the population; were Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia and Tennessee but some few came from the New England States.

The emigrants were not wealthy, as a rule; but neither were they shiftless out-casts from the older states.

They were people who wished to better their condition and were not afraid of long journeys or of facing rough surroundings, yet some were rich planters and large slave owners. Agriculture was the chief industry, those who were not engaged in planting were occupied in furnishing supplies to the planters or handling their crops. The principal crop was cotton, and for years the people rested content with one gift of nature, leaving a later generation to profit by the wonderful mineral riches hidden in mother earth. We must remember at that time Alabama was without a railroad making transportation very difficult. "It was not until 1831 a railroad was begun between Tuscumbia and Decatur, they were three years constructing forty-four miles, (Picketts'.) When we consider the many difficulties, which our God fearing ancestors surmounted; should we not look around and be more thankful for our many blessings? And in deep gratitude cry, as the Psalmist; "Bless the Lord, oh, my soul and all that is within me, bless His Moly name." These who were so full of enthusiasm, so full of the love of country and their God,, soon outgrew the little log house; and built one more commodious and enjoyed greater comforts and blessings from, "The hand of Him, who doeth all things well." This frame building was very comfortable.

The odd style of the pulpit was one of its great attractions. It was very high from the floor. The minister came in at a little door near the pulpit, walked in front of the pulpit to the further side, opened a small door leading to his seat inside of the enclosure; the door was then closed. On either side of the pulpit were doors leading from out of doors the congregation came in through them. In the rear of the church was a division of seats for the slaves. There were two isles arranged similar to the present church. There was no musical instrument, save the old time tuning fork in either the little log house or the frame building. It was generally the

privilege of one of those sainted fathers or mothes of Israel to raise the tune, how those walls echoed and re-echoed those hallowed tunes, so sacred to their memory. No grander music ever swelled the breezes, no cords more solemn ever passed the portals of Glory; than those sung by your garndsires, and reverberated by the walls of Valley Creek Church. The communion set was not that of the present, it was a very handsome in appearance but bore an antique look, it was not silver but possessed all the brightness of sterling ware, it was the old Brytania ware, so much valued in former days; but it was burned when Mr. Benjamin Glass' house was burned, he being an elder had charge of those things with some church records. The communion was served quite differently from the present mode; there was a very long table always kept in front of the pulpit, and wooden benches, the communicants went forward and sat around this table and were served; then returning quietly to their seats.

The frame church for many years was an uncelled building, the congregation felt the need of improvements, so, through the management of the good women all difficulties were overcome and the church was nicely sealed. The contract was given to Mr. Benton.

The original members of the old brush arbor organization have gone to their rest; there are some few of their children left, many grand children, the great-grand children are many. In passing, I shall call to the minds of our readers a few of the surviving children of the senior members. Mrs. Benj. Russell, perhaps better known as "Aunt Jane," daughter of Enoch Morgan, one of the original promoters, and an elder. She was born December 21, 1828.

Mrs. Kate Boggs, wife of M. R. Boggs and daughter of Benjamin A. Glass another elder of the early days.

Mrs. Mary Hopkins.

Mrs. Mary Cole.

Mrs. Eliza J. Cothran, nee Miss Callen.

Mr. A. L. Gilmer, son of James and Rachel Gilmer.

Mr. Osborn, son of Christopher Osborn.

Mr. Daniel Kenan.

Miss Rill Roller.

If there are others now living who have children of the organizers, the writer could not learn their names. The Pickens, Blairs, Goldsby's, Calhouns, Kenans, Irwins, Kings, Blevins, Marshalls, Taggarts, McCurdys, Phillips, Gilmer's, Callens were among the early settlers; but according to history the Morrisons, Morgans, Russells and Osbornes were the first to break the soil.

In 1835 the first camp meeting was held at Valley Creek, these meetings were held each year for many years. A large brush arbor was built to accommodate the crowds who attended as the church was not large enough. I am told, that many lived too far to go home and return each day; built tents and camped near the great arbor; that they might attend each service and not cause perhaps a spiritual lull by seeming indifferent. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Bacon hath said, "if a man be gracious to a stranger, it shows that he is a citizen of the world, and his heart is no island cut off from other islands, but a continent that joins them." So these people by their generosity, nobility, open heartedness and loyalty to their country and their God; now stand as a continent built of solid rock, "a tower of strength extending to the "Rock of Ages."

It was not long after the church was duly organized, that a plot of ground was laid out as a burying place for their dead. It contained about two acres, this land is a part of Benj. A. Glass' original estate. It is situated a quarter of a mile from Valley Creek Church, North-west. Whether this tract was purchased or donated the writer could not learn, it is believed by some to have been donated, recently about two more acres were obtained from the same estate. The first little grave in the former plot was a child of Mr. David Russell, he was a charter member of the church. "A little child shall lead them." When this little one died the burial ground had not

been selected. But Mr. Russell chose this spot for the last resting place of his little child, this being such a beautiful site, it was obtained for the Valley Creek Cemetery. The good and faithful women of the church years before the war, have the credit of raising the money to build the brick wall, which now partly stands as an enclosure, the rest of it having fallen down.

The workmanship being inferior or the water standing against it caused it to give away. Now, for almost a century the inhabitants of this region of country have brought their dead. The first made grave in the new tract, is that of little Alice Rountree, daughter of Robert M. and Mattie Moore Rountree. These plots are the sleeping places of a large congregation. Doubtless many more sleep beneath the sod, than walk above to tell of the past.

"This City of Rest" is studded over with many headstones, as memorials of the dead as of loving tributes of respect from the living.

There is nothing striking or peculiar concerning the headstones, they are all plain and solid reminding one of a good substantial people. Believing the monuments in a cemetery or grave yard, a fair index of the former social equality or differences among the dead, as the styles of houses among the living.

When passing through a country and you observe great and massive houses almost a rivalry to a palace. You will see in that cemetery proud monuments or towering obelisks rising aloft to mark the graves of the dead.

In our Valley Creek cemetery, we find those stones which are indicative of a refined, a proud and an unassuming people.

Graves are found there, marked as early as 1823, there are others who have not a grave stone, who were placed there before the mentioned date. In this quiet place of rest, there sleep heroes of the Revolutionary War; some of 1812 and many who shed their blood in the Civil War. Time hath wrought its changes, even in the cemetery many of the head-

stones and monuments are dark from exposure, having been a sentinel for almost ten decades, watching and marking out the resting place of the loved ones gone before. The twittering birds are singing above their lonely graves, but; "the speechless babe and the gray headed man, shall one by one be gathered by their sides." The original lands all around Valley Creek were fertile and valuable. These early settlers were known for their energy, their love of country and high standard of morality; none, since, have loved the house of God more than they. Think of this section of country, as once an unbroken, uncultivated forest, the home of the Red Man and they had but little disturbed the virgin soil. No market, no railroad, not even a mill whistle to break the sighs of the zephyrs, as they swept through the trees, a sublime soberness pervaded all nature. They could but say, "who is king of all this glory?" "The Lord of Host, he is King of Glory." Now the woodman's axe is heard to echo through the stillness. The white faces at first were few in number, but dauntless in courage. The settlers of Pleasant Valley were nearly all Scotch-Irish decent, they are the puritans of the South, the Blue Stockings of all countries. The emigrants; says Rev. John Douglas, came to this country through two avenues or routes. The one by the Delaware, their chief port Philadelphia the other a more southern landing the port of Charleston South Carolina. Those who landed at Chaleston continued their journey till they pitched their tents by some cool spring in the head-land or mountains. Those who landed in Philadelphia tarried perhaps a few years in the western part of the state, then emigrated to a more temeprate climate of Virginia, or the Carolinas, after transcending the mountain they followed down the stream till they met the flood-tide of up current, when from a common sympathy or a natural idiosyncrasy or speaking the same vernacular or a still stronger reason from being educated in the same religious creed, they readily coaleaced and formed the same society and worshipping assemblies. This latter was the magnet which drew them to-

gether and bound them more firmly than any other tie."

So we have learned the greater number of our primitive Valley Creek settlers were from Virginia or the Carolinas.

"Hither to the Lord hath brought us,"

Here, "Bethel I'll raise."

Just here I shall take the liberty of quoting from a letter by Dr. Rumple, (now deceased,) who for many years was pastor of the Presbyterian church at Salisbury, North Carolina. He says, "On the West coast side of Scotland almost North of Ireland, is situated the large island called Lewis, one of the Hebrides. Four years after the famous battle of Culloden Moss, where Charles Edward, the Pretender was defeated and put to flight, three brothers, James, John and Robert Morrison left the Island of Lewis and sailed to America. After tarrying a brief time in Pennsylvania they joined the current of Scotch-Irish emigrants that was flowing Southward and settling in the region now so well known as the Rocky River Congregation," in Cabarrus County, North Carolina. James, the eldest of these died in 1804, he was one of the first elders of Rocky River Church, his eldest son William succeeded him in the eldership and served till 1816, when he moved to Alabama and settled near Selma. There he showed such zeal in building up the church he was called the "Apostle of the Valley."

He was one of the first elders in Valley Creek Church. His descendants are still elders, deacons, Sunday School teachers and useful members in the church of their forefathers, from this family sprung a long line of ministers, more than fifty have and are preaching the word of God. We do not think it would be a mistake to say that our Valley Creek Church has its origin in the Rocky River Church of North Carolina. For the knowledge of those who do not know let us state that at first and prior to the organization of the General Assembly and this church, the Presbyterian church was composed of a single Presbytery, viz: Philadelphia, consisting at its organization, in 1706 of seven ministers and three

churches, this was the only governing body till 1717. The church had so increased, it was determined to sub-divide the existing body into at least three other Presbyteries, which were to constitute a synod, which should meet annually. Thus the Synod of Philadelphia was formed in 1717 and continued to be the chief Judicatory of the church till 1741, when a division took place in the synod, owing to a diversity of sentiment among its members—called, “Old and New sides.” It was then divided into two co-ordinate bodies called the synod of Philadelphia and the synod of New York. These two separate bodies continued till 1788. When this synod was divided into four synods, viz: New York, New Jersey, Philadelphia, Virginia and the Carolinas. Out of these was formed the General Assembly, which met for the first time in Philadelphia, May 21, 1789 and was opened with a sermon by Rev. John Witherspoon, D. D., after which Rev. John Rodgers, D. D., was elected the first moderator and from that to the present continued to be the highest court in the Presbyterian Church.

Organization.

After examining carefully into facts, we shall consider the date of the organization of our Valley Creek Church 1818 by Rev. Francis Porter, of Long Cane Church, Abbeville District, South Carolina, under a brush arbor with logs for seats. Mr. Porter was called as pastor of this church, besides being the pastor he taught a little school in a little log house not far from the church he in his humble way told of the love of our dying Savior, and his spare moments were spent digging and delving with the minds of the children, teaching the “young idea how to shoot.” How long he was pastor is not authentically known. Rev. Sloss was an early minister, his date could not be ascertained.

At the organization of the church William Morrison, who was elder in the Rocky River Church, North Carolina, was made elder in Valley Creek Church, with his brother Robert Morrison, David Russell and Enoch Morgan, all from North Carolina.

Third Pastor.

Rev. Thomas Alexander became pastor about 1822 and served faithfully for fourteen years, while in his charge he did a great deal of evangelistic work.

Fourth Pastor.

Rev. Junius B. King was fourteen years pastor, he began the pastorate about 1836. His attention to his flock was unremitting and God blessed his labor of love. The work of the Lord prospered in his hands, it was in the midst of his usefulness he was taken away, his remains are in Valley Creek Cemetery. He died November 22, 1850. His friends of the church who loved him so devotedly erected a monument to his memory.

The elders installed during his time of service. Samuel H. N. Dickson, Ira Sterdevant, Samuel B. Pickens, John N. Taggart.

Elders ordained. John C. McNair, Samuel B. Pickens, deacon then elder.

Fifth and Sixth Pastors.

Revs. George Bell and Henry Pharr, were pastors in the 50's.

Seventh Pastor.

Rev. J. M. Watson began in the 50's and remained till 1868, he was pastor during the turmoil and blood-shed of war, he always bore a brave face and his words were always encouraging. He died October 7th, 1891 at his home near Petersburg, Tennessee, age 71. Mr. Watson was born in England, February 3, 1820. His childhood was spent in Mobile, about the age of twenty he left that city to study for the Gospel Ministry. In the fall of 1850 he began work at Unity Church, Middle Tennessee. He served also the churches of Middleton, Rutherford, Allisonia, Laurel Hill, Fayetteville and Reese's church, Tennessee. Later he labored at Valley Creek Church, near Selma, serving there ten years, he was called to take charge of the Evangelistic work in Tuscaloosa

Presbytery, afterwards he took charge of the Second Presbyterian church in Birmingham. We all reverence his noble manly christian life, we love and will cherish his sainted memory.

The Elders installed during Rev. Watson's pastorate.—
Jas. E. Morrison, (deacon then elder). James Kenan.

Deacons Installed.—George C. Phillips.

Eighth Pastor.

Rev. G. W. Boggs, came November 1868, stayed till 1875, the pangs of war were still felt and confusion reigned. Mr. Boggs turned much of his attention to the young.

The good counsel he gave to them had much weight in making them the leading men and women of the church today. He feared nothing when doing his duty. Elders ordained by Rev. Boggs.— G. M. Callen, Virgil Irwin.

Deacons Ordained.—Robert W. Morrison.

Just here I feel it my duty to praise the good women of the church. We have praised the nobility of our men, were they alone in all these trials, all these pleasures? The women since creation have been the leaders in building monuments and erecting towers. So these men found in their good wives, sisters and mothers great help meets, a very pleasant help in time of trouble. While the good man of the house— was wielding the axe and the hammer, grinding at the mill, upturning the soil, clearing away the forest, their wives were always found where duty called them. We could hardly believe that our dear old church, Valley Creek, would stand the monument she does had it not been for some assistance from the God fearing women who sang the praises of God as they moved about their humble log cabin homes; which in later years were remodeled or rebuilt and designed into handsome homes. I shall steal a few moments of my readers time and relate a few deeds of nobleness and patriotism performed by our Valley Creek women. They organized an aid society, to do all they could to alleviate the suffering, and give comfort to our soldiers.

Besides spinning and weaving for their own household, they wrote to the Governor for cloth to make clothes of all kinds of the soldiers. He responded by sending them bolts of cloth. The basement of the church was their gathering place, here the work was cut and equally distributed. Socks were knit by the dozen pairs, one lady obligated herself to knit twenty-five dozen pairs. At the organization of this band of "willing workers," Mrs. Mary Pinckney Russell McIlwain was made president. Mrs. Mary Jane Morrison Russell, Secretary. With all this bearing upon them they did not forget the heathen in their darkness, but kept a torch burning for them, which sent a ray of light far across the sea. Miss Jenny McMurry was a great spirit wending her way from home to home, carrying her Bible and knitting in her reticule, praying and pleading for our sisters and brothers in the dark lands. This spirit for foreign missions was constantly kept ablaze. It was stated in one of our papers that Valley Creek Church was second in her foreign mission contribution, considering her membership and wealth. The soldiers attended the Valley Creek Church while they encamped at Kenan's Mill.

After the war though disturbed, crushed and dishartened our God fearing people hoped for and could see the dawning of better times, they could see the light bursting forth, they looked to a Heavenly Father, humbly trusting that he would hear their prayers. This congregation, through faith in their Master held firmly, in about 1873 the crops were a failure, their families could hardly be sustained; through all this time of want the church was not neglected.

Tenth Pastor.

Rev. W. W. Carothers was pastor from 1876 till his death March 1886, his life abounded in acts of kindness and friendly assistance under all circumstances, he bore himself with moderation, dignity and simplicity, his highest aim in life was to do his Master's will. I find the following clipping preserved in a scrap book of one who loved him. I take the liberty to republish it:

"Valley Creek Church, April 20, 1881."

Rev. W. W. Carothers writes we have just enjoyed a most precious communion service at Old Valley Creek Church in the Presbytery of South Alabama. During the past few years, God has greatly afflicted this church, taking away from us by death one after another of our members and several of our most beloved church officers, and leading to other localities some of our excellent members with their families. Our congregations were materially affected by these causes; and the church session was reduced to two members, one of these on account of very feeble health, being unable except very rarely, to attend the church services, my own heart was sad, and a spirit of gloom seemed to pervade the church. But on last Saturday, April 16, 1881, we ordained and installed two additional ruling elders, viz: Mr. William J. Morrison and Mr. Wm. M. Carothers. The services both on Saturday and Sabbath, appeared to be peculiarly solemn and impressive and I trust the Master was with us to comfort our hearts and strengthen our hands. Eight persons united with the church, six on profession of faith and two by certificate. There are still some others who I trust will ere long profess Christ and cast in their lot with us. "My heart is filled with gratitude to God for his great goodness," and I plead with him for his continued favor and enlarged blessings."

Mr. Carothers is buried in Valley Creek Cemetery, he was a pastor beloved and missed by all.

Deacons installed by Rev. W. W. Carothers.—J. H. McIlwain, Wm. J. Morrison, R. Russell Carothers, R. Howard Jones.

Elders ordained.—R. W. Morrison, Wm. M. Carothers, Wm. J. A. Morrison.

Eleventh Pastor.

Rev. James A. McLees, 1886-1888.

Eledrs Ordained.—Wm. J. Waugh, Jas M. Carothers.

Deacons Installed.— ——— —

Twelfth Pastor.

Rev. A. S. Doak, 1888-1891.

Elders Ordained.—A. L. Gilmer, (Mr. Gilmer is one of the oldest living members of the church.)

Thirteenth Pastor.

Rev. H. E. McClure, 1892-1900.

Mr. McClure was much beloved, he was thoughtful and congenial in his home and always on the alert to promote his Masters Kingdom. He was the first to occupy the new manse at Valley Creek, his doors were opened in love to all.

Deacons installed by Rev. H. E. McClure.—Thomas Kenan, Chas. Irwin, W. J. Rountree.

Elders Ordained.—R. Howard Jones. (Served as Deacon then Elder.) R. M. Rountree.

Fourteenth Pastor.

Rev. Francis Tappy, 1900-1903.

Rev. Francis Tappy was born in Petersburg, Virginia, some of his ancestors having been in that state from the earliest days of its settlement and once one having been a refugee from France after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. In early life Mr. Tappy united with the Washington Street Presbyterian Church. He attended the school of his home and afterwards Hampden, Sidney College Virginia. After several years spent in business Mr. Tappy, feeling that God had called him to the ministry gave up his business and took the Theological course at Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, completing his course he came at once to Alabama, having determined to do mission work for at least a few years preaching his first sermon at Catherine, Alabama May 1, 1897. After spending several years with the weaker churches of Tuscaloosa Presbytery, he accepted a call to the historic Valley Creek Church near Selma. Beginning his work there the second Sabbath in May 1900. Meanwhile the Presbytery of Tuscaloosa had licensed him to preach the gospel as a "Probationer for the Gospel Ministry" at an adjourned meeting

held in the First Church, Selma, on May 18, 1897 and had ordained him to the Ministry on December 6, 1897 at the regular fall meeting held at Eutaw, Alabama. On February 1, 1903, he was called to the First Presbyterian Church of Huntsville, Alabama, where he yet remains as pastor. On December 16, 1897, Mr. Tappey was united in marriage with Miss Sarah Strother Robins, daughter of Col. and Mrs. Joe Robins, of Wilcox county, she has proved a veritable "help mete" to her husband in every field of labor.

Deacons Installed by Mr. Tappey.—W. E. Callen, J. E. Morrison, Wm. Russell Jones.

Elders Ordained.—D. B. McMillian.

Fifteenth Pastor.

Rev. R. F. Otts, 1903-1906.

Sixteenth Pastor.

Rev. T. A. Bradshaw, remained a few months.

Seventeenth Pastor.

Rev. Junius Marcus Batte, the present incumbent of the pastorate of Valley Creek Church, was born in Panola County, Miss., son of Richard Baugh and Mollie Louice Batte, both Virginians. His home from early childhood was Jackson, Miss., his father being engaged there in business. Mr. Batte united with the First Presbyterian Church, at the age of twelve of which his father was a greatly beloved deacon.

But after the war financial trouble embarrassed the home this causing himself and his two brothers to battle in the tide of life to help the family. Mr. Batte after serving one firm for seven years, decided to swim the tide alone and own his business, which he did and managed it successfully. He married when about twenty-one to Miss Sallie Fitzgerald, of Sardis, Miss., a most noble Christian woman.

Shortly after that time he felt called to the Gospel Ministry, he responded to the call and resumed his college course, having a small family to support and himself to educate, he

battled on the way, he thought the guiding Providence led him. Through many difficulties and discouragements he conquered and won the prize of the high calling, finishing his course at the Louisville Theological Seminary, was licensed to preach the Gospel, April 1895, by the North Mississippi Presbytery. Few men have fought more bravely than he. He has been a successful minister and has always been much beloved and appreciated in his congregations.

His ancestors on his father's side were French-Huguenots, but during the great persecution, they emigrated to Yorkshire, England, where they built Mansell Castle, which for generations has been the home of some of the family, who have always stood for truth and right. His great-grandfather emigrated to Virginia in the latter part of the seventeenth century. Mr. Batte is a decendent from a long line of ministers many having distinguished themselves in American pulpits. His mother was known for her piety and sought diligently to instruct her children in the "paths of righteousness." In his every day walk, he shows the training of that gentle motherly hand that taught him daily the ways of love and purity. Mr. Batte losing his first wife was married again to Miss Katherine Alice Shipman, of Salem, Virginia, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Shipman. Mrs. Batte is an accomplished woman, capable of adapting herself to all circumstances, and is a great help to her husband in his work. He is a gifted Minister besides having great evangelistic powers. In his pastorate of about fourteen years he has been instrumental in adding 1,200 members to the communion. Mr. Batte was called to his present charge August 1908, was installed at Valley Creek Church in October and at Pisgah in November.

The Old Valley Creek Church.

It was my pleasure on Sunday, October 25, 1908 to attend the installation services of Rev. Junuis M. Batte at the Old Valley Creek Church near Selma, Alabama. She is the mother of the First Presbyterian Church, Selma, and the grandmother of the Alabama Street Church, Selma.

My heart swelled with pride as I gazed upon those sacred walls built there almost a century ago. The gray-headed fathers and mothers have crossed to the other side. They are singing the anthems in that happy land, "that is fairer than day." But they have left behind a legacy of which Presbyterians should be proud—a building which has stood the storms of years. She is still holding out the banner of the cross of Christ and crying, "I rocked your fathers and mothers in the cradle of Christ's love, now, as the century presses heavily upon my brow, hold my hands that I, too, may rock you in the cradle of love for the sake of him who died for you upon Calvary's brow."

The church was filled with those who loved the memory of the dead. The morning sermon was preached by Rev. L. G. Hames, of Demopolis, Alabama; it was full of the Gospel and the love of Christ. The ladies at one o'clock showed their ancestral hospitality by spreading dinner for all.

The regular installation service began at two o'clock. Rev. Mr. Hames again preached to a large audience another of his soul searching sermons from 1st John 3; 1, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."

Rev. E. B. Robinson of the Alabama Street Church, in an unassuming, gentle and Christlike way, charged the pastor. Judge Pitts, of Selma, charged the people. He counseled them not to neglect the pastor, to see that he was given the necessities of life and to hold up his hands in love and never allow him to be an object of criticism.

Mr. Batte has come into our midst to spread the love of Christ in our Valley Creek Church and community. Let us all come forward as banner bearers of Christ and help enable our mother church, Valley Creek, to wave her banner of glory for the coming century as she has done in the past.

"I love Thy church, O, God!

Her walls before Thee stand,

Dear as the apple of Thine eye,

Engraven on Thy hand."

Elders from the Organization.—Departed this life on September 16, 1839, in Pleasant Valley, Dallas County, Alabama. Mr. William Morrison, Sr., 75 years of age. A good man has gone to his rest. Mr. Morrison for many years sustained the office of Ruling Elder in the Valley Creek Presbyterian Church, to the doctrines of discipline of which he was ardently attached. While his whole character bore the impression of evangelical piety, there was perhaps no feature of it more remarkable than his love of the church and his earnest desire for her prosperity.

He was the son of James Morrison who came to this country some time in 1700. He finally located in North Carolina. William was his father's oldest son and succeeded him as Elder in the Rocky River Church in 1804, serving in that capacity till 1816 when he moved to Alabama. He showed so much zeal in building up the church that he was called the "Apostle of the Valley." He was one of the Elders at the organization of Valley Creek Church. He truly said:

"I love Thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of Thine abode,
The church our blest Redeemer bought,
With His own precious blood."

Mr. Robert Morrison was made Elder at the organization of Valley Creek Church and for years served faithfully this church. Going shoulder to shoulder with others building up a church in the wilderness. He moved to Mississippi in 1842. He and William Morrison, Sr., were brothers, coming together from the Rocky River Church, North Carolina.

Mr. David Russell was born January 7th, 1778 in North Carolina and came to Dallas County, Alabama about 1818. He was an elder in the Valley Creek Church from its organization till his death, February 15, 1857. He was faithful in every avenue of life. He loved to do his "Master's" work. He always deemed it a pleasure to extend a helping hand.

As the last golden sun of his years set glorious, he is at rest.

Mr. Enoch Morgan, born in North Carolina. Died September 3rd, 1840 in Dallas County Alabama, as an elder in the Valley Creek Presbyterian Church he was greatly beloved and respected, he was one of the faithful organizers and promoters of this church, whose untiring energies did much to build up the church. He always had a willing hand extended to do all in his power. His death was greatly lamented.

Mr. Benjamin A. Glass, died October 20, 1864, he was 70 years old. He emigrated from Mecklenberg County, North Carolina to Dallas County, Alabama in 1818. He was ordained ruling elder in the Presbyterian church, Valley Creek, in 1832 and continued in active duty till released by death.

"Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord."

Mr. John Russell, son of James and Elenor Russell, died June 29, 1837. He was made ruling elder in the Valley Creek Church 1832, died when he was only 28 years old, his life was short but faithful to the cause of his Master.

Mr. Samuel H. N. Dickson was made deacon of Valley Creek Church December 5, 1837, ceased to act in 1843, died.--

Mr. Ira Sterdevant was installed deacon in Valley Creek Church February 12, 1843, moved to Texas June 1854, died at an early age of 39.

Mr. Samuel B. Pickens was ordained deacon of Valley Creek Church in its early years, in 1843 he was made ruling elder in which capacity he served till his death 1851.

Mr. John N. Taggart, an old and honored citizen passed away in 1890 at his home at Mt. Pleasant, he was for a number of years ruling elder of Valley Creek Church and early in the 50's he and Mr. James E. Morrison alternately were Superintendents of the Sabbath School. January 1866 he moved to Mount Pleasant Church. No citizen was held in higher esteem, he was one of the early citizens, his old time virtues and honesty made him a man of mark in his community. He is buried at Valley Creek Cemetery. Rev. Doak officiated.

Mr. James A. Blair was ordained elder April 11, 1852, ceased to act July 30, 1854, died August 20, 1882.

Mr. John Johnston was ordained elder of Valley Creek April 11, 1852, died December 11, 1891.

Mr. Josiah Alexander ordained elder of Valley Creek Church April 1, 1852, he became a member of this church 1837, at the time of his death April 1, 1892 he had been elder for forty years.

Mr. James Kenan was ordained elder July 14, 1865, died January 27, 1874.

Mr. James Edward Morrison fell asleep in Jesus at his residence near Selma, Alabama May 1, 1874. He was born in Cabarras County, North Carolina June 3, 1811 and came to Alabama when quite young. In early life he became a christian and all through life he endeavored to let his light so shine that others seeing his good work might glorify our Father in Heaven. He worshiped God, as the God of his family. The Lord spared him to see them all grown and Professors of the Gospel he loved so well. He was a warm friend and a kind neighbor. For nearly twenty years he was ruling elder at Valley Creek Church. His prayer and counsel has been greatly missed. His seat was never vacant when able to fill it. He loved the gates of Zion. "Mark the perfect man, behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace."

Mr. George M. Callen was born in Dallas County, Alabama January 14, 1841. Of his very early life no more need be said than that he was a truthful, earnest, modest boy, and these traits of character marked him all through life. When 20 or 21 years old he joined the Confederate Army, continued to serve his country till the surrender of Lee's Army in April 1865. He made a profession of his faith in Christ a short time previous to the war and united with the Valley Creek Presbyterian Church on the day that the present church building was opened for worship April 17, 1859. All through his entire career as a soldier, his religious principles were maintained though subjected to many evils. He was a great promoter of education and for many years worked in the Public Schools of Selma. He was Sunday School Superinten-

dent. As an evidence of his esteem, he was elected ruling elder of Valley Creek Church. He was a liberal contributor to all that was good. He died at his home in Selma January 14, 1881. It can truly be said of him, "Not Lost, But Gone Before."

Acrostic—Addressed to Mrs. Fanny L. Callen, his wife.

In this world of sin and care
Notes of sorrow still strike our ear.

Man falls beneath the spoilers dart
Each land is filled with stricken hearts;
Mourn not, the clouds, are o'er us driven,
Our hearts to draw from earth to Heaven,
Receive in hope the chastening rod,
Your heart to school, and lead to God.

Our Father calls for those we love—
Faith points us to their home above.

Grieve not then for thy loved ones
Each heart should say, "Thy will be done."
O sooth thy heart all pierced and riven!
Rich grace sustains and fits for Heaven
Great as are our sorrows. One above
Ever looks with sympathy and love.

Many cares and griefs are here our lot,
And trusting God, we'll murmur not
Relying on his precious word
In Christ, our Shepherd, King and Lord,
Of all he does we may not tell,
Nor need we know—"It all is well."

"Cast all your burdens on the Lord
And he'll sustain—it is His word
List, as for Him beloved you weep,
Learn now, "The dead in Christ shall sleep"
Endless life's beyond the shining shore."
"Not lost; not lost, but gone before."

Pastor Valley Creek Church.

January 25, 1881.

Died in Dallas Cuntty, Ala., July 10, 1877, Mr. Virgil Irwin in the fiftieth year of his age. From his childhood he was trained in the christian religion. About twenty years before his death he made a profession of religion and united with the Valley Creek Presbyterian Church. In early life by the death of his father he was left to the maternal care of his mother, a most excellent, pious christian woman. All through life he exhibited the fruits of her christian training and Godly example. Mr. Irwin was endowed with a mind of great strength. His temperament was kind and genial, his nature warm and generous, his conduct through life was marked by the same strict integrity, conscientious adherence to principle and to duty, unselfish regard for the right and good of others, which caused his teacher to say of him, "He is an ornament to my school, and a model for my boys." In all the avenues of life he was earnestly respected. He was ordained ruling elder of the church and died a short time afterward. He loved the church, was a Bible scholar, the principles of that sacred volume gave directions to the tenor of his life. "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Mr. R. W. Morrison was ordained elder July 1, 1877, died September 15, 1878, he served as deacon eight years before being ordained elder. His grandfather, Robert Morrison and his father James E. Morrison had served years before him as deacons, he was admitted to the communion of the church October 23, 1857.

Mr. William M. Carothers became a member of Valley Creek Church on certificate in 1877, he being a devoted faithful member was ordained elder April 16, 1881, was dismissed to A. R. Church, Oak Hill, Wilcox County, November 16, 1884.

Mr. W. J. Morrison, Dallas County, died at Kings' Sanatorium, Sunday morning September 18, 1898. He was a man known for his popularity in state and church. He was tax collector of Dallas County for many years. Mr. Morrison was a modest, unobtrusive man, he loved his family and was a

companion to his boys. Clifford, Mel, William, Eugene, J. Edward and Robert Wiley. He was always found at home unless urgent business called him elsewhere. He was a devoted consistent member of the Valley Creek Church and for many years a deacon, then Ruling Elder. He was indeed a brother, a friend and a counselor. His life was so gentle, his heart so full of charity, his devotion to his church so sincere, his life so pure, his little acts of charity so sweet, no one could doubt, that he had gone to that home prepared for the just.

Mr. W. J. Waugh was a member and ruling elder in the Valley Creek Church. He died suddenly June 13, 1891. He married Miss Jennie Russell. In 1885 his wife died leaving one child. In 1887, was elected Ruling Elder and shortly afterwards was made clerk of the session and in both capacities he served faithfully till his death. As a business man he was intelligent and capable, as a christian man he was faithful and conservative. He was a true man and a gentleman, generous to a fault. He was esteemed and loved by all. We cannot understand the ways of the Almighty. "The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works." "He doeth all things well."

Mr. John M. Carothers was ordained elder of Valley Creek Church January 16, 1887, he was dismissed August 22, 1893 to Newberne Church, he was a worthy officer, loved and esteemed by all. The church was grieved to give up such a noble character and suffered from the loss.

Mr. A. L. Gilmer was ordained elder of Valley Creek Church December 1, 1889 and has served faithfully in that capacity and was for a number of years clerk of session. Mr. Gilmer is the senior member of the session. His parents Mr. and Mrs. James Gilmer were among the early settlers of this section and were members of Valley Creek Church till the organization of Pisgah in 1832, where they moved their membership. December 11, 1879 Mr. A. L. Gilmer placed his

membership with the Mother Church, he has always been a devoted faithful member.

Mr. R. Howard Jones was ordained deacon of Valley Creek Church June 11, 1884. Ruling Elder Aug. 21, 1892. Mr. Jones is an Alabamaian by birth, taught school at different times in other states. He married a daughter of one of the early settlers of Pleasant Valley, Miss Mary P. Russell. He was a member of the Methodist church of his boy-hood. After deciding to make his home in Dallas County, he placed his membership in 1879 with Valley Creek of which he is now a praying consecrated member an elder and Sabbath School Superintendent. He is much beloved by all.

Mr. Robert Morrison Runtree was ordained elder of the Valley Creek Church 1892. He is a young man of excellent ability being ordained an elder when about twenty-one years old that speaks for his former life and later he was made clerk of session. These positions he has filled and still holds with honor. His influence for good can not be recorded, his kindness is felt abroad. He is the son of W. J. and Sarah Elizabeth Morrison Rountree, both known for their activity in church work. Mr. Rountree was married about twelve years ago to Miss Martha Moore, of Summerfield Alabama.

Mr. D. M. McMillan was ordained Ruling Elder of Valley Creek Church January 1902 and remaining in that capacity to the present. Mr. McMillan and his wife came from the Presbyterian Church of Bethel, Alabama and united with this church January 21, 1894.

Deacons From the Organization.

Mr. John C. McNair ordained deacon of Valley Creek Church about 1837 was dismissed to Mount Pleasant Church January 7, 1866, died October 21, 1870.

Mr. Samuel B. Pickens was installed as deacon in the early years of the organization of Valley Creek Church in 1843 he was promoted to the office of Ruling Elder in that capacity he served faithfully till 1851 when death claimed him.

He was found faithful under all circumstances. After serving so faithfully at every post of duty his Master called him to an eternal rest. He was missed by the church.

Mr. James E. Morrison, Sr., was ordained deacon in his young manhood. 1857 was made elder and died May 1, 1874, he is the father of Mrs. W. J. Rountree and the grand-father of R. M. Rountree who is now elder, he is also an uncle of James Edward Morrison Jr., who is deacon and the father-in-law of W. J. Rountree who is deacon.

Mr. M. R. Boggs died at his residence a few miles from Selma. He was a deacon in the Valley Creek Presbyterian Church, installed in 1851, died April 1884. He was one of the foremost citizens both as merchant and planter. He was a native of South Carolina. But for many years prominently identified with the interests of Selma and Dallas County. He was at the head of Boggs, Mott & Wood, large grocery, afterwards the leading member of Boggs & Co., Cotton Factory, He was a consistent influential member of the Presbyterian Church and was greatly beloved. Died April 18, 1884 at his home in Dallas County, Alabama, of malarial apoplexy. Mr. William J. A. Russell was a native of Dallas County, born April 20, 1820, he spent his entire life near the home of his childhood. In 1839 he made a public profession of religion and united with Valley Creek Church. December 21, 1843 he married Miss M. J. Morrison and they began life together. He was a member of the first board of county commissioners and continued so till two years before his death, he resigned on account of failing health. In 1852 he was ordained Ruling Elder of Valley Creek Church and for more than thirty years he faithfully performed his duty in that office. In all relations of life he was honored, trusted and loved. As a husband and father he was devoted, he was a wise counsellor and a prudent adviser, both in church and in secular things. In all this he had a help meet, who was a guiding star, his beloved and devoted wife. It was beautifully said, "she was a woman without a defect," she gave food, clothing and shelter to the

needy, the colored people as well as the white people were recipients of her favors. Many miss the tender care of "Aunt Jane," as she is so lovingly called. A good man and woman have gone to Heaven to join loved ones gone before. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."

Mr. George C. Phillips was ordained deacon January 7, 1866 and died August 30, 1872.

Mr. Robert W. Morrison was ordained deacon May 15, 1870 in seven years he was given the honored position as Ruling Elder and served in this capacity till his death, September 15, 1878.

Mr. J. H. McIlwain became a member of Valley Creek Church in 1860 was ordained deacon July 1, 1877 died September 15, 1878.

Mr. W. J. Morrison was installed deacon 1877 was ordained elder April 16, 1881 and served till the chain was broken by death, September 18, 1898.

Mr. R. Russell Carothers was admitted as a member of Valley Creek Church April 16, 1881, was installed as deacon June 15, 1884 and continues to hold this office, though living at Oak Hill, he remained faithful to his church.

Mr. R. H. Jones was ordained deacon June 15, 1884, having served faithfully that office he was made elder August 21, 1892 and he is a faithful praying elder.

Mr. Thomas Kenan was ordained deacon August 21, 1892, was dismissed to Broad Street Church 1894, returned to Valley Creek Church 1901. January 1909 was dismissed with his wife to Second Presbyterian Church Birmingham, Alabama.

Mr. Charles F. Irwin ordained deacon August 21, 1892.

Mr. W. J. Rountree was admitted as a member of Valley Creek Church April 2, 1899, on examination. Mr. Rountree was raised at Pea Ridge, Alabama, married Sarah Elizabeth Morrison, a grand-daughter of Robert Morrison an elder of Valley Creek Church and a daughter of James E. Morrison also an elder. Mr. Rountree finally making Valley Creek

neighborhood his home, he identified himself with that church, he was soon made a deacon and treasurer of the church which position he has filled with great satisfaction. He is also a teacher in the Sunday School. Mr. Rountree is a gentleman, genial and kind always ready to show kindness and great favors. He is one in whom the Ladies Aid Society find great comfort to lighten their burdens and level down the rough places. He is loved by all.

Mr. William Russell Jones, son of R. H. and Mary P. Russell Jones. Mr. Jones became a member of Valley Creek Church 1890, he has been raised in the lap of the mother church and he like some of the other sons has become an officer in the church. In 1892 he was ordained a deacon following the footsteps of his father and grand-father. It is with pride that Valley Creek can record many of her young sons, becoming officers, to fill the ranks made vacant by those who have answered the roll call in the great beyond. Mr. Jones was married a few years ago to Miss Eliene Cloud, of South Carolina. He is a young man full of energy and enterprise.

Mr. Jas. Edward Morrison, son of W. J. and Georgia Morrison, he is a child of Valley Creek, born and raised under her influence. He became a member of Valley Creek Church 1890. Within a few years he was ordained as deacon, following the example of his father who served in the capacity of elder and deacon. Mr. James Edward is a young man of fine qualifications, genial in manner, always kind and obliging.

Mr. W. E. Callen, son of Hamilton Henderson and Eugenia Florence Harris Callen. Mr. Callen losing both of his parents in early childhood, was forced to stem the tide of life without the guiding hands of his parents. He was a guardian and brother to his sisters. Mr. Callen was born near Selma, descending from a long line of Callens, who originally came from the Carolinas, he is a self-made man; highly esteemed by all for his high standard of morality and honesty. He has from his boyhood been connected with the church, having

served at one time as Secretary of the Sabbath School of the First Presbyterian Church, Selma, Alabama. In 1895 he was united in marriage to Miss Martha Lester Roane, daughter of Judge A. T. Roan, of Grenada, Mississippi. In 1896 he with his wife united with Valley Creek Church, in 1902 he was ordained deacon, which position he has faithfully served. Mr. Callen is a man full of energy, zeal and good works.

First Manse.

In writing a history of this nature it will be necessary to lay aside system. Let us pause a while and take an imaginary view of the old manse, which stood about one mile north of W. E. Morgans and about two miles from the church. This property originally belonged to Rev. Junius B. King, once pastor of Valley Creek Church. He had it built, the work was done by John Taggart an elder and McCamma Morgan. Mr. King on a trip to New Orleans took the cholera and died at this home. Dr. Cater of the First Church, Selma, attended upon Mr. King in his last hours. As the spirit took its flight, Dr. Cater remarked; thus: "I feel as if my greatest stay has been shot from under me." It was but two days from that time, that Dr. Cater lay in death's cold grasp, his spirit had winged its flight. The same disease had carried him to his eternal resting place. They sleep near each other in the Valley Creek Cemetery. After Mr. King's death his home was bought by the church and used as a manse. In the course of time, the gnawing pangs of ruin saw it rapidly decaying, but at last the angry tongues of fire licked it out of existence.

The situation was an inconvenient one. Shortly before it was burned, it was sold and the price used to help build a new manse. A neat five room cottage situated on the Range Line Road, two miles from the edge of Selma. It has an enclosure of three acres of land, which was bought of W. J. Rountree at thirty dollars an acre. I will incidently state, the Ladies Aid Society is making strenuous effort to raise money to build another room to it and make other improvements.

The writer is safe in saying those things will be about completed when this little volume is beginning its tour of circulation.

The little clipping below may appeal to the hearts of some.

Valley Creek Supper.

"Wednesday night a delightful church supper was given by the ladies of Valley Creek Presbyterian Church, at the Manse, two miles from Selma.

Mr. Sadler Carothers took a Times man out, as newspaper men always have a fine time when there are plenty of good things to eat, and pretty girls. It is needless to tell you that we had a delightful time.

Will Rountree and Eugene Morrison introduced us around as a widower, that was all that was necessary. The hospitality of the good people of Valley Creek was that open genial kind, that would make a man with even less timidity than a news gatherer feel perfectly at home. The supper was such as to tempt the appetite of the Gods. Miss Nannie Phillips was the fair waitress in white apron that waited on the news man. The only way that the scribe could be induced to leave the table was; by some one saying double price was charged to a fellow who ate an hour. But the shover of the graphite was not eating all that time. He was watching Jim Kennedy, Pres. Partridge, Jim Privitte and Charlie Johnson store away turkey and nick nacks.

While looking at them he had one ear open listening at Gene Morrison make love to a pretty girl between times when his knife and folk were making excursions to his mouth, which flew open every time his elbow bent and that was with the regularity of clock work. Walton Callen did not seem to enjoy himself as much as usual, a little beauty with lovely orbs under a pair of drooping lashes, was not there; Walton was sad, very sad.

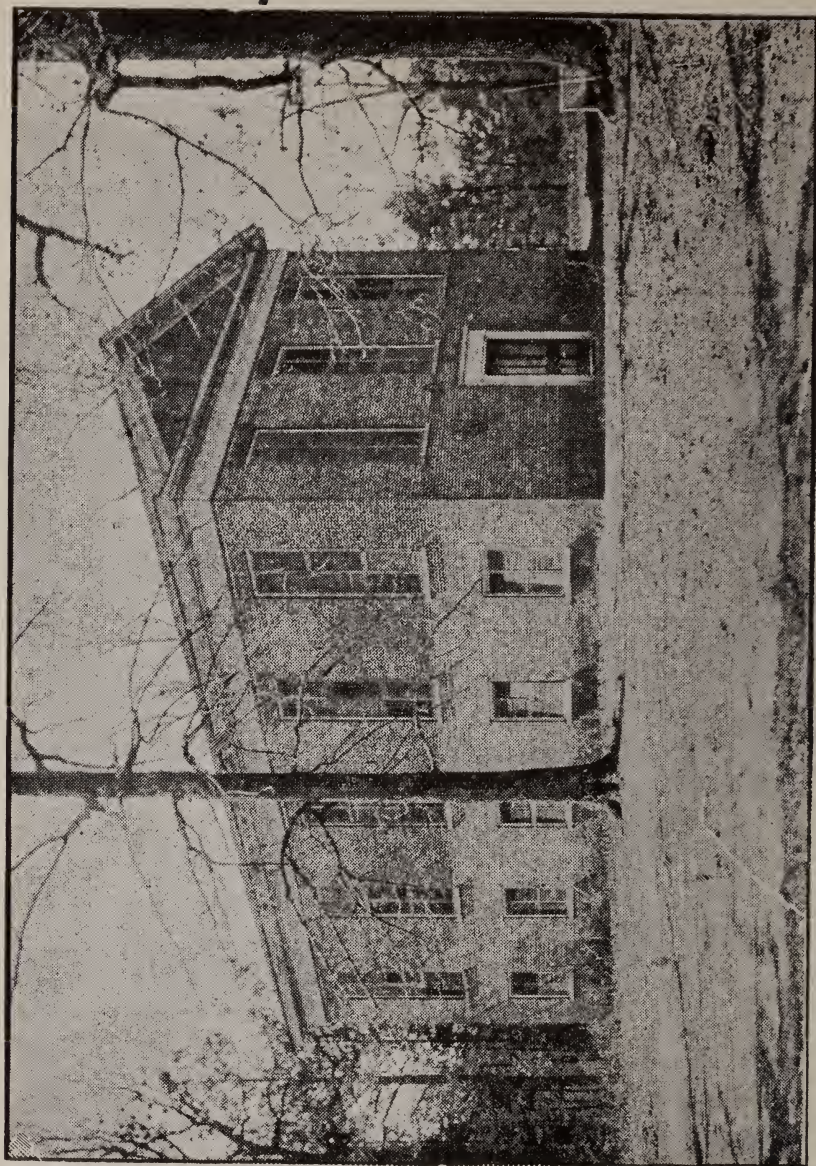
Miss Jessi Eskridge did much to enliven the evening and her sparkling wit and brilliant conversation was highly enjoyed by all.

Many went out from the city. The supper was for the purpose of paying off a little debt of fifty dollars on the Manse, over seventy-one dollars was realized. Valley Creek Church round which so many sacred memories cluster has lost thirty members during the year; but it is hoped that the old organization, which has gone through so many trying times will regain her former strength and will continue to be a power of strength in the land.

....

The Present Church.

The present church building was erected in 1857-58 a few years before the cry of war was heard. Judging from the style and elegance of the building, the congregation from its organization, grew in number and in prosperity. A few changes have taken place. The pulpit has been lowered a little and the gallery closed. The drivers sat in the gallery, for at this time such great advancement had taken place, the members all came in their carriages and driven by one of their slaves. The basement was used for the slaves. After the morning service of the white people, the slaves assembled in the basement and listened to a sermon, from the same minister. Some member of the white congregation were appointed to remain with the minister, it was generally an elder or a deacon. There was a large negro membership and they gave liberally of what they had to African Missions. But when the cry of freedom was heard they were not long in withdrawing themselves from the Valley Creek Church and uniting with one of their own color, there were about one hundred colored communicants at the close of the war. The basement was also used as an assembly hall for the "Grange," a monthly meeting of the men, where they discussed the current events and studied the trend of things in general; thereby, making of themselves better, nobler and more useful and intelligent citizens. In the earlier days prayer meetings were held from house to house, but when the handsome brick building was completed which cost no less than \$15,000 Rev. Jas. M. Wat-



VALLEY CREEK CHURCH

son, her first pastor, held prayer meeting services every Thursday afternoon in the church, as from its organization, night services have never been held.

This new building was for years heated by a furnace. The wreckage of which now remains in the basement. After the war, it was difficult to get the furnace attended to, so it was removed and stoves put in the church. Doubtless many will remember what became of the frame church. It was sold to Mr. John Callen and torn down and the material used in building cabins for negroes.

Deed of the Church Land.

Deed from R. J. W. Russell to W. J. A. Russell and J. E. McNair and J. E. Morrison, representatives of Valley Creek Church. The State of Alabama, Dallas County, Alabama.

Know all men by these presents, that we, Robert J. W. Russell and Elizabeth Ann Russell his wife, of the county and state foresaid, do for and in consideration of the sum of one hundred dollars, to us, secured to be paid by the representatives of Valley Creek Church, hath this day bargained, granted, sold and conveyed, and doth hereby bargain, grant, sell and convey unto, William J. A. Russell, John C. McNair and James A. Morrison, the acting representatives or their successors in office a certain tract or parcel of land, designated and known, and described as follows; to-wit: Commencing at the southwest corner of the lands deeded to said church by David Russell and running in a north-western direction along the road, that leads by the said R. J. W. Russell's, from the said southwest corner to a corner on the due north and south line, dividing the said land from the said Russell, within ten feet of his peach orchard fence, thence north till it comes opposite the north east corner of the lands belonging to the said Valley Creek Church, thence east to said corner, containing two acres more or less. To have and to hold the same with all and singular, the hereditaments and appurtenances to the premises aforesaid, thereunto pertaining, to have and to hold the same

forever against the claim or claims of all and every person or persons lawfully claiming the same, and against one and each of our heirs, executors, administrators and assigns forever, unto the within named persons as the representatives of the said Valley Creek Church and their successors in office signed, sealed and delivered, the same on this the 21st of February, A. D., 1853.

In presence of

R. J. W. Russell, (Seal.)

E. A. Russell, (Seal.)

Hugh McIlwain. (Seal.)

THE STATE OF ALABAMA, DALLAS COUNTY.

Before me James Gilmer, Jr., an acting Justice of the Peace in and for the state and county aforesaid, personally came the above named persons, whose names is subscribed to foregoing deed and in my presence, acknowledged that they signed, sealed and delivered the same to the said representatives of the Valley Creek Church and their successors in office for the consideration therein expressed and on the day and year there written, and said Elizabeth Ann Russell, being by me examined separate and apart from her said husband, acknowledge that she signed, sealed and delivered the foregoing deed freely and of her own accord without fear, threat or compulsion of her said husband. Given under my hand and seal, this 21st day of February, A. D., 1853.

James Gilmer, Jr., (J. P. Seal.)

STATE OF ALABAMA, DALLAS COUNTY.

J. Thomas Rainer, Judge of the Probate Court of said county, do hereby certify that the foregoing deed and certificate was this day recorded in this office in Book 2 of Deeds at pages 657 and 658 and that the same was filed in this office for record on the 11th day of June, 1855.

Given under my hand and seal this day at office in Cahaba, this 14th day of June, 1855.

Thomas Rainer,
Judge of Probate.

In the days of our forefathers, organs, pianos, flutes and violins were not used in the churches.

Time changes nature, even the hardest rock may be worn away by a constant dripping; so in the progress of time Valley Creek Church saw reasons to change some. In 1862 she placed her first musical instrument, a melodion in the church. The older heads could not enjoy the melody as it was heard by the young minds, these gray headed sires, wished to worship God only from the heart and send those sacred thoughts to the pearly gates of glory through the melodies that came from their lips. So the new instrument caused great dissatisfaction for awhile till time erased all bad feelings. Mrs. Julia Fythie was selected as the organist, having had previous experience in the art. During her term of service covering a period of about forty-six years, there have been about five instruments. Mrs. Fythie was always at her post of duty unless providentially prevented. In the fall of 1908 she begged to be allowed to retire from further service. The mantle has now fallen upon Mrs. J. M. Batte.

Monument.

Valley Creek Church stands as a monument and her influence has been felt beyond the bounds of the state. She is the mother, grand-mother and great-grand-mother of churches and of Presbyterianism.

"There is no velvet so soft as a mother's lap, no star so lovely as her smile, no music so melodious as her voice, no rose so fragrant as the memory of her love." We all look with pride upon Valley Creek Church with her dead heroes and their valliant deeds; which could have only been accomplished by a brave God-fearing people. Pisgah, First Presbyterian Church, Selma, and Mt. Pleasant are her daughters, and Alabama Street Church, Selma, her grand-daughter. She has sent forth good men, brave men, deacons, elders and Ministers to other churches, namely:

Rev. Archabald Morgan. Rev. Curdy Emmerson and

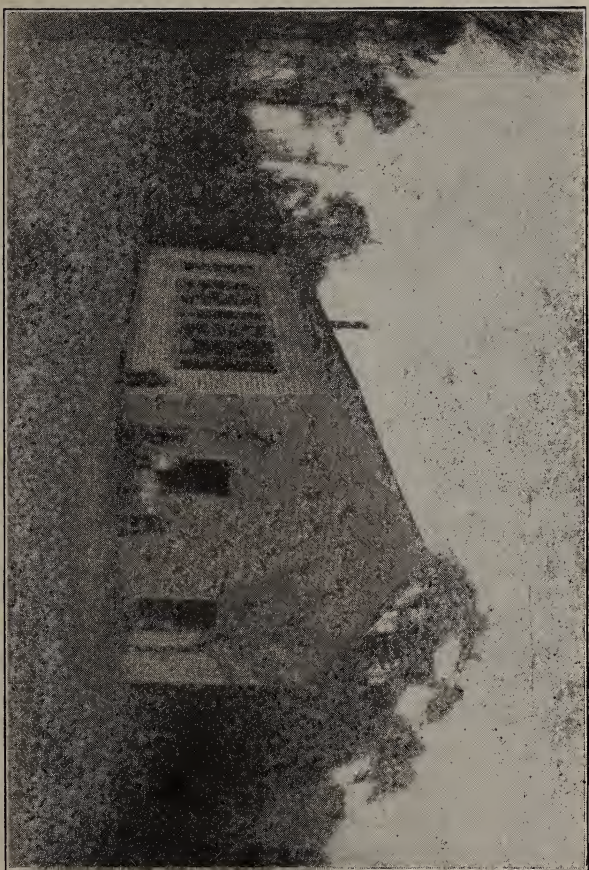
Rev. Jesse D. Rountree were once boys in Valley Creek Church.

Like a mother who loves her children she has gathered them under her wing for protection and has ministered to them in their troubles and deeds.

The First Presbyterian Church, Selma, was submerged in debt and would have been sold, had it not been for the mother church. She gave to her of her substance and caused her to stand. Pisgah, her oldest daughter, was in a similar condition, the mother gladly extended to her the hand of benevolence, through that and other causes, Pisgah has blossomed like a rose. The following clipping will tell her sorrow, her trials, her triumphs:

Pisgah Church.

The Pisgah Church, near Selma, which is a branch of the mother church at Valley Creek, on Sunday, November 8, 1903, had her first installation service in thirty years. Time has wrought many changes, the hoary heads were very few. Rev. F. E. Bagley, of Plantersville preached the morning sermon and charged the pastor. Mr. Bagby performed his duty as one of the Master's servants could do. Rev. E. B. Robinson, of Alabama Street Church, Selma, preached the afternoon sermon. Elder L. W. Hubbard, of Selma, charged the people. At the close Judge Pitts warned the congregation not to neglect the Sunday School. The original Pisgah church was built in 1832; it was active and progressive till 1866 when a cyclone swept it from its foundation and hurled it to destruction. Those dear old sainted fathers and mothers, who are now singing in Glory, by toil and sacrifice built another church, that their children might still have a house of worship. As time rolled on, those faithful servants were called to heaven, the membership became small, the church was closed and almost sold. But God never intended it so. Almost four years ago He sent two of His undershepherds, Rev. N. B. Keahey and Rev. J. M. Batte, the former was called last summer to his reward of eternal rest. These servants conducted a series



PISGAH CHURCH

of sermons in the forsaken little building; at this time the church was reorganized. Last summer Mr. Batte was called as their pastor; he is now working among them. The congregation is alive with enthusiasm. The church has been newly painted inside and out; there is a beautiful new carpet on the floor; other things have been added for the comfort of the congregation. The Sabbath School has been reorganized. At the close of the morning service a bountiful dinner was spread for all. We believe the prayers of those sainted fathers and mothers are still being answered.

In 1832 Rev. Alexanda, an Evangelist, held meetings near Pisgah, he perhaps organized the church. Mr. and Mrs. James Gilmer moved their membership from Valley Creek and united there.

Mr. James Gilmer, Mr. Craig, Mr. Fair and Mr. Drennon and Mr. Emerson were the first elders of Pisgah.

The Present Officers Are.

Deacons—Mr. Claud Harrison, Mr. John Logan.

Elders—Mr. B. M. Summers, Mr. W. H. Harrison. Mr. J. M. Gilmer, grand-son of Mr. James Gilmer and son of Mr. A. L. Gilmer, both having served as elders, one in Pisgah, the other in Valley Creek.

Hospitality of Valley Creek Church.

My history would not be complete should I fail to make a few remarks concerning the hospitality, which was born in this church, it has been reared in her people.

If you have never visited among this congregation do so. The gracious hand-shake, the cordial reception and the bountiful repast received at their hands, will make the youth rejoice, the old feel young and the sorrowful will say, "behind the cloud the sun still shining," even the blushing maid is made to feel at ease, and the cry of an infant is hushed with a lullaby song.

In this circle of God's children are those who are "careful to entertain strangers," "thereby they may entertain angels"

and in many cases, they have been ministering angels to those who have sought refuge in their homes.

Sabbath School.

Valley Creek from her earliest organization established a Sabbath School where the children and many of the parents were trained in the work of the Lord with her many ups and downs, her many changes, she still boasts of her Sabbath School.

Death with his cycle keen has removed many of the hoary heads, yet, there are some few left who are faithful; being living monuments of encouragements for the young.

Superintendent.—Mr. R. H. Jones.

Secretary.—John Morgan, son of W. E. Morgan (deceased) who was secretary for many years. This mantle of honor has fallen upon his son who faithfully fills the office.

Teachers.—Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Rountree, Rev. J. M. Batte, Miss Flora Gilmer, Mr. R. H. Jones.

Organist.—Miss Idyllette Batte.

Societies.

The churches' records show that there has always been some kind of organization to assist the pastor. The present society is known as the "Ladies Aid and Missionary Society." It is an organization meeting once a month from house to house, each member taking a lunch and spreading it upon the hostess table; thereby promoting sociability and at the same time accomplishing much good.

This organization is about twenty years old, dating from Rev. A. S. Doak's pastorate. Mrs. W. J. A. Russell (deceased) was the first President; though almost too feeble to do much work, through respect and love, the presidency was given to her. I find the following tribute written by the society: "In the community in which she lived, her life was a sweet benediction and her memory and influence will long live in the hearts of all who knew her."

A Charitable Mission.

The ladies of Pleasant Valley Grange assisted by the ladies of Valley Creek are engaged today at social gatherings in the "Grange Hall," three miles from Selma in a quilting for the benefit of an orphan of one of the old members of the Grange, now at Talladega Orphans' Home. These excellent ladies delight in good deeds and are ever active in the performance of them.

Mrs. W. J. Rountree is now President, she has filled the office with much diligence and honor for twelve or fifteen years.

Vice-President.—Mrs. M. R. McIlwain.

Secretary.—Mrs. W. C. Phillips.

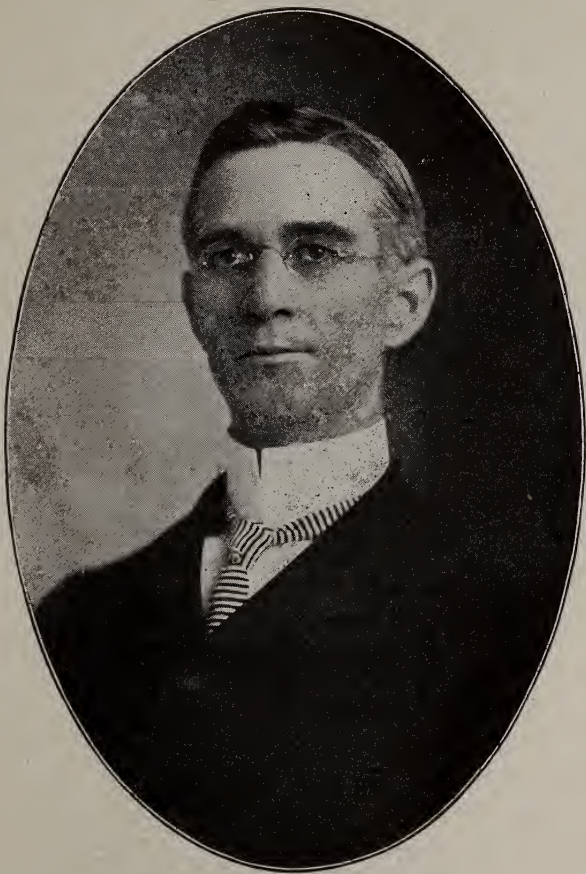
Treasurer.—Miss Flora Gilmer.

This society has a large membership.

Ministers Who Were Boys at Valley Creek.

Rev. Archabald McMorgan, was one of the early Sunday School scholars of Valley Creek he died in Washington, Arkansas, he was reared within a mile of the church, was the son of Mr. Enoch Morgan, from this generation of Morgans there has gone a long line of ministers. Revs. Robert and Milton Kirkpatrick, are great-grand-sons. Four generations of Morgans have served in office at Valley Creek Church. Enoch Morgan elder, Jas. E. Morgan deacon, Wm. E. Morgan Sec., of Sunday Schools and the latter's son Jno. Morgan succeeding his father at his death. Rev. Curdy Emmerson, his relatives were very conspicuous in the organization of Pisgah church. Rev. Emmerson died in Brazil.

Rev. Jessie D. Rountree another one of Valley Creek's sons is now located as minister at Apalachicola Florida, he is married and has an interesting family. He is the son of W. J. Rountree and Sarah Elizabeth Morrison Rountree the only surviving one of the three ministers who went out directly from Valley Creek Church. In a letter I received myself directly from Mr. Rountree is found this beautiful tribute to Valley



REV. J. D. ROUNTREE

Creek Church. "I am proud of my dear old mother church and everything that pertains to her sacred memory—as she has stood and fought for the victory in her Christ—she has stood for Christ with a nobleness, second to none of her sisters. I believe her name is written in the "Lambs' Book of Life."

Summary.

Rev. Junius M. Batte, pastor; Ruling Elders.—R. H. Jones D. B. McMillan, A. L. Gilmer. R. M. Rountree, Clerk of Session.

Deacons.—Wm. Russell Jones, W. J. Rountree. Treasurer.—J. Ed. Morrison, W. E. Callen, Russell Carothers. The church has on her role about 86 members. It has enrolled from her organization perhaps more than five hundred members.

Deacons 18. Elders 26. Pastors 17.

McIlwain Mission.

This little band of worshippers assemble together at the school house twice a month to worship, the services are conducted under the auspices of the Valley Creek Church. Sunday School was organized there on the first Sunday in January 1909 with J. M. Gilmer, Superintendent and Claud Williams, Assistant Superintendent. A few years back at different times a school was taught at Valley Creek in the basement by Miss Nettie Irwin, Miss Ernestine Irwin and Miss Nathilie Cloud. This church has been the sheltering place of many scenes, many of joy and many of sorrow. The dead have passed beneath her columns, the saddened processions have passed her portals following onto the grave. The bride in her beauty, in her sunshine of joy has stood at the altar.

The century is almost at its close.

A sadness falls from the wings of my thoughts,

Perhaps some kindness has been omitted

Or perhaps some deed unwrought.

Roll From the Organization Though Not Perfect.

Deacons.—John C. McNair, Sam B. Pickens, Jas. E. Morrison, Sr., Milton R. Boggs, Wm. J. A. Russell, Geo. C. Phillips Robt. W. Morrison, R. Russel Carothers, R. Howard Jones, Thomas Kenan, Chas. F. Irwin, W. J. Rountree, W. E. Callen, J. E. Morrison, Jr., Wm. Russel Jones.

Elders.—Wm. Morrison, Robt. Morrison, David Russel, Enoch Morgan, Benj. A. Glass, John Russell, Sam H. N. Dickson, Ira Sterdevant, Sam B. Pickens, John N. Taggart, Jas. A. Blair, John Johnson, Josiah Alexander, James E. Morrison, Sr., James Kenan, G. M. Callen, Virgil Irwin, R. W. Morrison, Wm. M. Carothers, Wm. J. A. Morrison, Wm. J. Waugh, John M. Carothers, A. L. Gilmer, R. Howard Jones, R. M. Rountree, D. B. McMillan.

Members.

Mrs. Mary A. Alexander, Josiah Alexander, Elizabeth Alexander, Wm. B. Alexander, James S. Alexander, R. W. Armstrong, Mrs. Lawrence Armstrong, Mrs. Ella B. Alexander, Mrs. Pollie H. Alexander, Andrew M. Boggs, James A. Blair, Mrs. Josephene Barnett, Lettie A. Boggs, Malinda Boggs Lecontia Boggs, Margrette A. Blair, Mrs. Ada Barrow, Sarah A. Blair, Lucindia E. Boggs, Mrs. L. O. Bruce, Susan R. Boggs, Mrs. Mary I. Beatie, Mary A. Barnett, Wm. M. Boggs, Louisa Boggs, Mrs. Martha Boggs, Mary Alice Boggs, Levere Bevard, Mary H. Baker, Joe E. Bristo, Nancy Callen, Mary Crawford, Matilda Cothran, Sarah O. Callen, Eliza J. Cothran, Mrs. Amy I. Cole, G. M. Callen, Mrs. Elizabeth Callen, L. A. Callen, Mrs. Fanny Callen, E. P. Cothran, George Cothran, R. C. Callen, Ellen C. Callen, Mary Culverhouse, Rev. W. W. Carothers, Mrs. Mary Carothers, W. M. Carothers, Mrs. Phebe Carothers, J. L. Carothers, John M. Carothers, P. R. Carothers, Robert B. Callen, Mary A. Callen, Mrs. Jennie Callen, Sadler Carothers, Milton W. Carothers, Mrs. Ann Carothers, Mrs. J. M. Carothers, Ada L. Callen, Hamilton Harris Callen, W. E. Callen, Mrs. Mattie L. Callen, J. T. Chancy, Mrs. E. R. Doak, Saba Doak, Florine

Doak, Mrs. Cathrine Glass, Mrs. Jane M. Gunn, Miss Flora Gilmer, Mrs. C. J. Gilmer, John Green, Maggie Greea, Edward Gilmer, Mrs. Mary J. Henry, Elizah M. Hornbeak, Frances Hooks, Benj. C. Harrison, Ellie B. Hudson, Gracie C. Hudson, H. S. Hudson, Mrs. James R. Irwin, Elizabeth C. Johnson, Wm. S. Johnson, Alonzo Irwin, Mrs. Mary Irwin, J. Colwell Johnson, Mary A. Johnson, Virgil Irwin, Annetta C. Johnson, A. Lunetta Johnson, Mary E. Johnson, Mrs. M. Johnson, John Johnson, Mrs. Delia Johnson, Eugenia D. Johnson, F. L. Johnson, Mrs. Martha Johnson, Georgia E. Johnson, Mrs. M. E. Irwin, R. H. Jones, Chas. F. Irwin, E. P. Irwin, Lilly F. Irwin, Wm. Russell Jones, Vida M. Jones, Sadie Jeanette Jones, Julia S. Kenan, Catharine Kenan, Mrs. M. E. King, James Kenan, Owen Kenan, Mrs. M. E. Kenan, Daniel L. Kenan, Mrs. D. L. Kenan, Mrs. A. M. Luther, Mrs. Mary P. McIlwain, Mrs. M. R. McIlwain, Mrs. Nancy Morrison, Robert W. Morrison, J. H. McIlwain, Jas. E. Morrison, Mrs. C. A. Morrison, Rebecca Morrison, Emma J. Riggs, Mrs. Georgia Morrison, Wm. J. Morrison, Robt. C. Morrison, Mary E. Morgan, Katy A. Morrison, Clifford Morrison, Wm. Eugene Morrisn, Robt. Wiley Morrison, W. E. Morgan, Lelia Morgan, D. M. McMillan, Mrs. D. M. McMillian, M. H. Morrison, James E. Morrison, Lizzie Moore, Wm. J. McIlwain, Mrs. Mary McIlwain, S. P. McIlwain, Mrs. Mary R. McIlwain, Lizzie McIlwain, Mrs. H. E. McClure, Rev. H. E. McClure, Annabel McIlwain, Mrs. Martha Pickens, J. B. Phillips, Robt. E. Osborne, Sarah E. Phillips, Miss Leo Phillips, Mrs. Adaline Phillips, Prudence Phillips, N. Wilson Phillips, George C. Phillips, Miss E. R. Phillips, Louise S. Phillips, Isabel Phillips, George Phillips, Kate Willetta Osborne, Nannie Phillips, Robt. J. Osborne, Wm. G. Privett, Mrs. Rebecca Roller, Mrs. Mary Rice, Mrs. Sarah E. Rountree, W. J. A. Russell, Mary P. Russell, Ella C. Russell, F. A. Rodgers, Parilla B. Roller, A. McD. Roller, S. Jennie Russell, Mrs. Jane Russell, Ida C. Riggs, Mrs. Mary C. Roller, Albert S. Riggs, Junius W. Riggs, Wm. Rodgers, Wm. Roller, R. M. Rountree, Mrs. Mattie Rountree, Jimmie Rountree, W. J. Rountree, Mrs. Ann

Shackelford, Julia C. Smith, Alice Shaw, Wm. H. Strider, Dr. R. W. Stafford, Carmelia Stafford, Willie A. Strider, Mary E. Tate, Geo. W. Tate, John E. Tate, Mary Tate, Edna Tate, Mrs. Martha Watson, John Waugh, Mrs. Louise Waugh, Mollie Waugh, Etta Waugh, Albert H. Waugh, Mrs. Lula R. Waugh, Wm. J. Waugh, Geo. A. Werline, Mary P. Williams, Mrs. Frances Tappy, Miss Adella Grimes, Miss Helen Hudson.

The Roll as Revised in Feb., 1907 With Added Members.

James Alexander, Mrs. P. H. Alexander, Maggie Blair, Abby Blair, Mrs. F. A. Bradshaw, Mrs. C. C. Bradshaw, W. W. Bell, Mrs. E. J. Bell, Archie Bell, Mrs. Eliza Cothran, Mrs. Mary Carothers, Russell R. Carothers, Walton Callen, Mrs. Walton Callen, Mrs. Russel Carothers, Mrs. John Campbell, Mrs. Julia Fythia, Flora Gilmer, A. L. Gilmer, Edward Gilmer, Mrs. Flora Gillis, Ida Gillis, Ernest Gillis, Mary Emma Gillis Harvey Gillis, Miss S. Gillis, Lilly Irwin, C. F. Irwin, Ernestine Irwin, Lewis Irwin, E. P. Irwin, R. H. Jones, Mrs. Mary P. Jones, Wm. Russel Jones, Mrs. Wm. Russel Jones, Veida M. Jones, Jeanette S. Jones, Ella C. Jones, Emma Jones, G. C. Johnson, Mr. Dan L. Kenan, Mrs. Dan L. Kenan, Mrs. Thos. G. Kenan, Mr. Thos. G. Kenan, Owen Kenan, Mrs. Georgia Morrison, Mary E. Morgan, Lela Morgan, Mrs. Ida Morgan, C. P. Morrison, R. W. Morrison, J. E. Morrison, D. B. McMillan, Mrs. D. B. McMillan, Willetta Morgan, Mrs. Maggie McIlwain, Mrs. Mary R. McIlwain, Pinckney McIlwain, Robert Osborne, Mrs. Lenora Privett, Miss E. R. Phillips, Miss I. P. Phillips, Crawford Phillips, Willie Privett, Mrs. Sarah E. Rountree, Ella C. Russell Rill Roller, Robt. M. Rountree, Mrs. R. M. Rountree, Jas. Rountree, Mrs. Jas. Rountree, Mrs. Maud Rountree, Rev. J. D. Rountree, W. J. Rountree, Mrs. Emma J. Riggs, Wm. H. Strider, Mrs. George Strider, Edna Tate, Mrs. Jennie Waugh Swift, Marion Woods, Mrs. Anna Bell Woods, M. C. Gillis, Roderick Gillis, Katie Gillis, Willie Gillis, Alric Gillis, Mrs. Latham and Son, Mr. Latham, Mrs. Little, Mr. Little, Mr. Nichols, Mrs. Nichols, Lizzie iggs, J. M. Batte, Idyllette E. Batte, Mary Ruth Batte, Marguerette E. Batte, Junius LeeRoy

Batte, Roy Morgan, John Morgan, Louis Morgan, Miss Dicy Jackson.

There are a few on the above roll who are dead and a few have moved their membership elsewhere.



First Presbyterian Church, Selma, Alabama.

This church was organized December 22, 1838 by Revs. F. H. Porter and T. S. Witherspoon of the Presbytery of South Alabama. The names of sixteen members were enrolled as follows:

Roderick McLeod, Mrs. Mary McLeod, David Hamilton, Mrs. Mary W. Hamilton, Robert A. Nicoll, David C. Russell, James D. Monk, Robt. H. W. Bigger, Mrs. Catherine Hunter, Mrs. Martha Lawrence, Mrs. Sarah Gant, Mrs. Isabella Porter, Jacob, a servant of Rev. F. H. Porter, G. M. Ormond, Mrs. Mary W. Nicoll, Miss Isabella Talbot.

Of these members, three; David C. Russell, Giles M. Ormand and Robert A. Nicholl were duly elected and ordained as ruling elders. On January 13th, 1839, Robert A. Nicholl was chosen the first stated clerk of the session. The infant church remained eighteen months without a pastor, being supplied from time to time by Revs. F. H. Porter, Robert Nall and J. B. King and the membership was more than doubled during their ministrations.

Pastors.

Rev. William Frederick McRee was first pastor, he was a graduate of Princeton Seminary, was recommended to the church by Dr. A. Alexander. After supplying the pulpit for a time was elected pastor January 4, 1840, he resigned in 1844.

Second Pastor.—Rev. Richard B. Cater D. D., became stated supply, in 1845 was installed the third Sabbath in February 1847. The church grew in membership and influence under Dr. Cater, he died November 24, 1850.

Rev. Abner A. Porter, D. D., began his labor in the church in September 1851, was installed in 1853, April 24th. Dr. Porter remained with the church during a long and useful pastorate. The last two years of his pastorate Dr. Porter was in ill health, the pulpit was supplied part of the time by Rev. P. Calhoun and the remainder of the time by Rev. J. T. Armsted. Dr. Porter resigned October 1860.

Rev. Arthur W. Small took charge of the church November 1860, was installed April 1861. Mr. Small was pastor during the trying times of the civil war, nobly and faithfully did he fill the duties of his office. He was killed in the battle of Selma, April 2, 1865.

Rev. W. J. Lowry, D. D., was called to the vacant pastorate November 4, 1866. Dr. Lowry's pastorate was long and successful. A flourishing mission was started in East Selma which developed into Alabama Street Presbyterian church, January 12, 1873. Thirty persons from this church were granted letters to join Alabama Street Church. Dr. Lowry resigned in the fall of 1875.

Rev. Alfred J. Morrison took charge of the church as supply January 1, 1876, fifty persons were added to the communion before his untimely death July 6, 1876.

Rev. Thos. W. Hooper, D. D., was elected pastor November 3, 1876 installed December 3, 1876. Dr. Hoopers' pastorate was one of the longest in the history of the church, after a service of twelve faithful years of labor he resigned June 1888.

Dr. E. O. Guerrant visited the field in the spring of 1889 but the Presbytery refused to grant its consent for him to leave Kentucky.

Rev. Russell Cecil was then called to the pastorate, he took charge May 19, was installed November 1889.

Dr. A. A. Little came to this pastorate 1901, he was a greatly beloved man. The church greatly prospered under his rule, it was a great sorrow to the church when his resignation was presented to the congregation. Dr. Little resigned in the summer of 1908 and accepted a call in Georgia. The church is at present without an installed pastor, but is being supplied by different divines. Dr. Mebane, of North Carolina has been with this church for a few Sundays. Rev. Daniel J. Curry, of Dublin, Virginia is now supplying the pulpit.

Sunday School.

The pioneers in this branch of the church work, as far as we can learn were David C. Russell and Amos H. Lloyd. Mr. Russell was the first Superintendent, he was followed successively in the office by P. L. Sink, James W. Lapsley, N. D. Cross, James H. Franklin and S. D. Holt. The present Superintendent is Mr. Foot Hooper, a man much beloved and admired. The first structure ever used by the Presbyterians of Selma, was on Water Street near Lauderdale. The next on the corner of Dallas and Washington streets. Another building was erected in 1847 costing about \$1,500, it was remodeled and improved in 1868 at an expense of \$1,200. About twelve years ago the present handsome building was erected. This church is in a thriving, growing condition.

Societies.

The Ladies Benevolent and Foreign Missionary Society is the oldest organization of the kind in the church, has existed since 1851.

Ladies' Home and Foreign Mission Society.

Young Ladies Society.

Childrens' Missionary Society.

Junior Missionary Society.

The Covenantors.

This church has sent out a number of ministers, namely:

Rev. W. P. Armstrong, Rev. P. A. Lapsley, Rev. Jas. Lapsley, Mr. John Axford is now at the Seminary, preparatory to the Ministry. This church has in Africa one of its old members, C. A. DeYampert, a colored Missionary who was sent from this church and is supported by it, he having been a member.

List of Elders from Organization 1838.

David C. Russell, Giles M. Ormond, Robt. A. Nicoll, Jas. B. Harrison, Thomas Smith, Philip Weaver, E. W. Marks, Jas. M. Lapsley, Wm. H. Fellows, Jas. W. Lapsley, J. J. Porter, R. R. Morey, T. P. Gary, R. W. Huston, Jos. Hardie, Ed. Woods, Wm. P. Armstrong, Robt. Lapsley, H. L. McKee, C. W. Hooper, J. H. Franklin, S. F. Hobbs, C. F. Force, W. B. Gill, W. R. Nelson, J. R. Kenan, S. D. Holt, Golsby King, R. H. Agee, J. F. Hooper, F. E. Gary, E. H. Hobbs, J. F. Hooper, George Phillips, P. H. Pitts.

Deacons From Organization.

John F. Conoly, Jas. D. Monk, David Hamilton, Thos. L. Craig, J. W. Lapsley, Jos. Hardie, H. M. Holman, J. J. Porter, Robt. Lapsley, M. R. Boggs, Ed. Woods, N. D. Cross, C. W. Hooper, M. J. Williams, W. P. Armstrong, J. H. Franklin, S. F. Hobbs, W. R. Nelson, J. P. Paisley, Geo. Phillips, A. E. Baker, Cornelius Young, C. F. Force, John C. Graham, J. W. Love, T. P. Gary, W. F. Layman, J. R. Kenan, J. A. Chaney, D. A. Kennedy, Golsby King, R. H. Agee, E. H. Hobbs, R. W. Huston, J. E. Axford, W. H. Phillips, W. S. Monk, P. H. Pitts, J. J. Hooper, W. T. Atkins, L. M. Hooper, W. W. Harper, C. Kirkpatrick, Wm. Cummin, Eugene Morrison, L. A. Moone, P. T. Shanks, John Paisley, W. B. Gill.



Alabama Street Presbyterian Church.

A Mission Sunday School was organized by Joseph Hardie and H. L. McKee, ruling elders in the First Presbyterian Church Selma, during the year July 21, 1872, in that part of the city of Selma, known as East Selma in a little room rented for the purpose with three scholars, Miss Emma McArthur, Miss Annie Scurry (Mrs. Connel) and Edward S. Gatchell. Thus began a great work. The surroundings at first were humble and crude, it was seated with old benches from the First Church, a small organ was soon afterwards introduced. Neither of the teachers, Major Hardie or Mr. McKee at that time could raise a tune, even Old Hundred might have been merged into Duke Street or Rockingham before the third line was reached. This fortunately did not last long. On July 28, four other persons were added to the roll. Mr. Charles Lardent, Geo. Lardent, Miss Minnie Lardent and Miss Annie McArthur. Mr. Wm. Henry Houston, an elder from Pisgah Church joined in the work. The third Sunday August 4, four others were added to the roll. Miss Bettie Harrison, (Mrs. Rogers) Miss Mary Harrison, (Mrs. Hull) Frank Kelton and Mrs. Annie E. Dennis. On this date Mr. William Wallace united in the work and proved a faithful worker.

It is a matter worth recording that in the beginning of

the enterprise there was doubt in the minds of those whom the helpers sought out, as to the motive that prompted such action and it was with difficulty that their doubts were dissipated, for but few of those living in this part of the city had predilections towards the Presbyterian Church. In the outset a thorough canvass was made by Major Hardie and Mr. McKee in all the vicinity of the chapel with cards of invitation and by personal interview they sought to bring those who had no church connection into this work. While at the first it was slow, the seed sown was soon made manifest and the school grew rapidly and by early Autumn fifty names were enrolled.

Connected with this early work are many interesting incidents, which if told would fill a volume, for the work led workers into homes over whose threshold no Christian man or woman for this purpose had been. One, a German woman, and in the Old Country highly connected, and who by marriage had brought the frowns of parents upon her, was found in a destitute condition and she with her young daughter were cared for and the latter brought into Sunday School. The poor woman who had earned her living, such as it was, by fortune telling, at once burned her cards and gave her heart to the Savior and fixed her hope on heaven. The daughter grew to fine womanhood and now fills an honored station in a near city.

Many incidents of interest could be told of the early history of this church work. The increase in the work and the interest in the attendance required more facilities and these were promptly furnished. In December 1872 a meeting was begun in the chapel, conducted by the Rev. John T. McBryde, who at the time was acting as assistant to the pastor of the First Church, and it was continued through the holidays and until January 12, 1873. when the Rev. James Watson, the Evangelist of the Presbytery proceeded to organize a church, as the outgrowth of less than six months work. Elder Jos. Hardie and H. L. McKee were elders in the First Church at the time; and Mr. C. S. Crane from the same church were

shosen elders and William Wallace as deacon, and some thirty-three members formed the organization. The last of the month the Rev. Peter Gowan from Charleston Presbytery made a visit to the church, then organized and was soon afterwards called as a pastor. The Chapel became too small and inconvenient and a building suitable was projected. Friends to the movement were found and the money furnished with which to build the new church. The site being a gift of Mrs. Weaver. Sept. 30, 1875 Rev. W. J. Lowry, pastor of the First Church dedicated the new building. The membership now continued to grow.

Early in the work there came three persons who through its instrumentality became ministers of the gospel, nameiy: Phillip Bohbeck, Julius P. Word and Lawrence M. Hensell. A little later there was added two others who became active members of the school. Wm. H. Raymond, of Marion, who united with the church on his removal to Selma and John R. McAlpine, of Talladega, who also became a minister of the gospel. Not only these who identified themselves as members of the church but others from the First Church and some who were here without a fixed habitation joined in the Sunday School work. Two of these became while yet teachers in the Sunday School candidates for the ministry and afterwards were ordained as such. The one Rev. J. W. Walden and the other, H. R. Raymond, Jr. Mr. Walden still lives and has distinguished himself in the Southern Church. Mr. Raymond after some years in the ministry died. It is to be noted here that from the teachers of this school six persons have gone into the ministry with no less than six years after its organization. At least five of the six gave as their reason for seeking the ministry the influence of the surroundings and an example in the field thus occupied. Mr. H. L. McKee filled the place of Superintendent of Sabbath School for thirteen years with W. H. Raymond succeeding and James H. Franklin and E. S. Gatchell. The present Superintendent, G. F. Warner. Assistant Superintendent; Marshall Metz, Secretary; Miss Lola Whitman Assistant Secretary, Miss Ola Latham; Treasurer J. E. Morrow.

Pastors of Alabama Street Church.

Rev. P. Gowan was installed May 1873: Rev. G. W. Boggs pastor of Valley Creek Church was chairman and preached the sermon and charged the people. Rev. W. J. Lowry delivered the charge to the pastor. His pastorate continued thirteen years.

Rev. G. E. Chandler was installed pastor, November 1887.

Rev. W. D. Spurlin preached the sermon. Rev. R. A. Lapsley charged the pastor and Rev. C. D. Waller charged the people. Rev. A. S. Doak, Rev. L. G. Hames both popular pastors. Rev. T. R. Best was next called to the pastorate.

The Present pastor, Rev. E. B. Robinson began his work as pastor March 1, 1906. Mr. Robinson is a young enthusiastic and much beloved pastor. He has done much for the good of the church during his pastorate. He had not been in the work but a few months when a movement was started for building a new structure, the little frame church on Range Avenue became too small to accommodate the growing congregation. July 1906 the movement was started, in July 1907 the reality was being realized, the beautiful building which is located on Range Avenue and Alabama Streets was being built and it was completed about January 1908, costing from \$10,000 to \$12,000. Mr. Robinson should have much of the praise for the success of such a handsome building and the members look upon it with pride for it is indeed a monument to their work for the Master's Kingdom.

Ruling Elders From Organization.

Joseph Hardie, H. L. McKee, C. S. Crane, Wm. M. Waller, W. H. Raymond, R. R. Morey, J. H. Barr, G. F. Warner, E. A. Buhler, J. H. Franklin, W. Adams, E. S. Gatchell, L. W. Hubbard, J. Stephenson, J. W. Preston, H. Harthan.

Deacons.

W. M. Wallace, J. P. Word, W. H. Raymond, J. S. Fythie, J. R. McAlpine, W. G. Self, J. T. Owen, E. A. Buhler, Hugh Foster, L. W. Hubbard, J. H. Barr, Edwin Hull, H. Harthan,



REV. E. B. ROBINSON

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I have secured some of my historical points from an early history written by Mr. H. L. McKee, who was an elder in this church, he is now Superintendent of "Our Orphan's Home" Talladega, Alabama.

We shall consider the following churches to have sprung directly or indirectly from the Valley Creek organization. Mount Pleasant, Vine Hill, Stanton and Plantersville.

Mount Pleasant Church.

Sustains rather a mixed relation to Valley Creek. She is a daughter at the same time a sister. The records of early years were burned a few years ago, when deacon Ed. Morrow's residence was burned, he being the clerk of session. His Widow Mrs. Callie Morrow gave us the following information, having heard her parents and grand-parents so often relate the story in her childhood. The colony which organized Valley Creek Church when they settled in Alabama, divided and some settled in Mount Pleasant neighborhood, about nine miles north from Valley Creek Church. A few years later, in 1823, Rev. Sloss, the pastor of Valley Creek Church together with a few of her members and a number of the colony who had not identified themselves with Valley Creek, organized Mount Pleasant Church.

She has stood the storms of many years, during the eighty-six years of her past life, she has always had some good faithful members who have been diligent about the "Father's Business," and through the reverses as well as the prosperity she has always faithfully held up the banner of the cross. A multitude have been spiritually born within her walls. She now has a membership of about sixty-one and also a flourishing Sabbath School. She has five ruling elders and three deacons.

Vine Hill Church.

Is a grand-daughter of Valley Creek, September 13, 1879. The Revs. J. W. Hooper and Peter Gowan, the commission appointed by the Presbytery of South Alabama to organize Vine Hill Church, met with the people of the church and organized with the members who were dismissed from the First Church, Selma and two whom the Commission received on profession of faith in Christ. The charter members were as follows:

Mrs. Agnes Norvill, Mrs. E. M. Kay, Mr. James Lapsley, Mrs. Sarah E. Lapsley, Robert Lapsley, James Lapsley, Sam Lapsley, Dr. S. G. Todd, Mrs. Sarah J. D. Todd, Mrs. Margaret A. Morrow. All from the First Church, Selma, Alabama, and Mrs. Lucretia and Teal Vingant on profession of faith in Christ. Jas. W. Lapsley and Dr. S. G. Todd were elected ruling elders and James Lapsley as deacon. Vine Hill Church has sent out several ministers and one Missionary, Rev. Samuel N. Lapsley, who laid down his life in the dark continent for his Master's sake. Many changes have taken place since the organization. She now has a membership of about fifty-two and a flourishing Sabbath School with a regular mid-week prayer meeting.

Stanton Church.

On May 26, 1885, the Presbyterian tent which was used by the Synodical Evangelist of the Synod of Alabama, was pitched at Stanton at the invitation of Mr. Richard Coe, of Gregory, Coe Lumber Company and others. On Wednesday evening May 28, Rev. W. H. Claggett, Synodical Evangelist assisted by Mr. Charles Birch who led the music with his cornet, began a series of services which were continued through the seventh day of June. On the 4th Stanton Church was organized with ten members. Mr. James R. McArthur, of Pisgah, Mrs. N. J. McArthur, of Alabama Street Church, Miss Mary J. A. McArthur from M. E. Church of Mayesville Ala., Mr. Richard Coe of the First Church Selma, and Mrs. A. C. Coe and five

baptized non-communicants who were admitted, at the same service seven others were received. Mr. C. F. Dorethet, from First Church, Miss Alice Liles and Mrs. E. J. Barnett of Valley Creek and Mr. James Crawford and Mrs. Alice Crawford and Mr. and Mrs. David Lodge on profession. James McArthur, Richard Coe, C. F. Douthit were elected and ordained as ruling elders. Rev. Robert A. Lapsley was called as stated supply, he being their first minister. Two years later O. H. P. Wright, A. S. Liles and David Lodge were elected and ordained as deacons. Stanton's organization erected a nice house of worship and flourished for a number of years; but the hand of death weakened its membership and others moved away, the church now has but a few members, but has services once a month.

Plantersville Church.

Was organized May 5, 1901 by Evangelist D. N. Yarbrow, with fifteen members, nine of which came from Vine Hill Church, one from Stanton and five from elsewhere. Rev. J. A. Shaw was called as pastor. Dr. S. G. Todd, E. E. Todd and J. A. Fulford were made ruling elders. J. H. McNeil, E. N. Todd and Claude M. Fulford were made deacons.

Since the organization some have been removed by death and some have left the community, but others have united. The church has now her second pastor and is in a flourishing condition. They once worshipped in a Union Church until this year. They have sold their interest to the Methodist brethren and are now making efforts to build a new house of worship.

The above group of four churches called a few years ago as their pastors Rev. F. E. Bagby, a man full of energy and good works, he has studied his congregations from all points, so that he might work for their advancement. The manse is now being greatly improved, the amount of improvements will be about \$700. Mr. Bagby is holding the interest of the field

in a wonderful way, he possesses for them a peculiar magnetism and is capable of presenting the Gospel in a clear understanding manner, the work is growing under his influence.

The Last Leaf.

In our little book the last leaf is almost turned, we have spoken of the living and rambled amid the tombs gathering up the flowers and scattered them around in beautiful thoughts. Should not our lives be composed of greater things than these. Let us bring our thoughts into action, wit hour many words of kindness and in little kindly deeds make a brighter world, casting a ray of sun-shine into the humble cottage. Make the world rejoice that we do yet live. Do not wait till death's cold hand embraces the one, you should have given a word of comfort or of cheer.

“Too late to bring your fragrant offering,
Or twine love's myrtle for my marble brow
When I am dead! Today your tribute bring
I need them now!

Waste no laudations on my deafened ear,
Nor lay choice flowers within my icy hand
Your tardy meed of praise I shall not hear,
Nor understand.

To pile a wreath of flowers upon my mound,
Or speak the kindly words you should have said,
Will be but mockery—a hollow sound
When I am dead.”

A Tribute to Valley Creek Church.

By Rev. Junius M. Batte.

Nearly one hundred years or more,
 In the heart of the wild wood
 God's children met to pray;
 The hallowed scenes have stood,
 And answered prayer
 Lingers still to the present there.

On a lofty hill of mother earth
 Near the stream that bears its name
 Is the old brick church called "Valley Creek,"
 Of grand immortal fame.

For generations between her walls
 The sound of "Truth" was heard
 Humble followers of Christ
 Still attend the, "Living Word."

No mighty works of world wide fame
 To arouse a dying race,
 Has from her blessed walls e'er come
 Yet, mighty streams of grace

Which year by year has gone,
 Into the heart of her worshippers,
 And built a monument of love
 As high as Heaven adorned
 Defying the "powers" of earth and hell
 She stands for the living Christ.

"Old Church of our Fathers,"
 How dearly we love thee
 Thy glorious work of the past, has shown
 How we who are living, still may adore thee
 Redoubling our efforts to give others, a crown.

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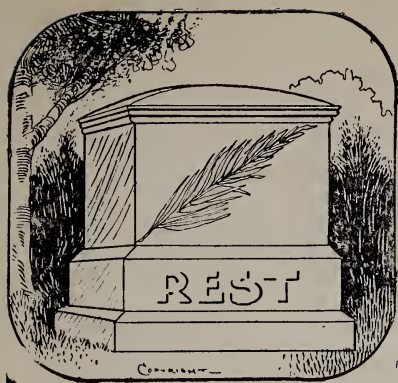
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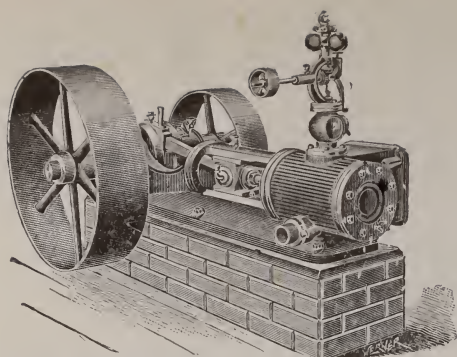
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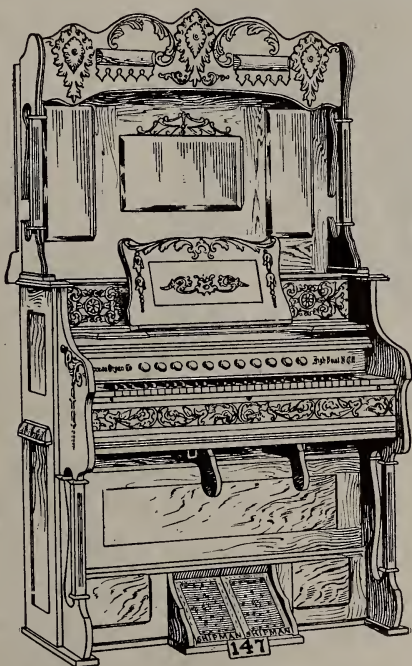
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